

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF LANDS

YEAR END FIRE REPORT

CALENDAR YEAR 2004



Rusty Eck-CPTPA

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YEAR END FIRE REPORT
FOR CY 2004

SEASON IN REVIEW

Even under the effects of a multiple-year drought, the 2004 fire season was below average in terms of fire occurrence and acreage burned. On lands for which the Idaho Department of Lands, Clearwater Potlatch Timber Protective Association, and Southern Idaho Timber Protective Association provide wildland fire protection, fire fighters responded to 292 fires (67 percent of average). These fires burned 1,852 acres, which is 20 percent of average.

Quick response by dedicated teams of firefighters kept 94 percent of these fires below 10 acres.

Human activity ignited 87 fires (30 percent) and accounted for 83 percent of the burned area, for 1,546 acres. Debris burning started the most person-caused fires and burned the most area. Miscellaneous was the most expensive human-caused category.

Lightning started 205 fires (70 percent of the year's total) and burned 306 acres or 17% percent of the total area.

FIRE WEATHER

Winter ended with an adequate snow pack in the northern part of the State, but below normal in the Boise area. Spring rains were a little above average in the north, but the drought continued in the south. Fuel conditions began drying Statewide in early summer, with Energy Release Components above normal. Mid August changed the picture. Far above average precipitation fell from Lewiston north. Even the Boise area was slightly above average for August moisture received. For all intents and purposes, the fire season ended in September this year. The damper air this year allowed thunderstorm development which shows in the high percentage of lightning fires.



altocumulus standing lenticularis cloud-high winds aloft.

MULTIPLE FIRES

The 2004 fire season saw 47 instances of more than one fire per day on a Forest Protective District. Priest Lake, Craig Mountain, and CPTPA each had seven fires reported in one day. One two-day period had 30 ignitions in the State's Protection Area. A total of 146 (50%) fires occurred on multiple fire days.

LARGE FIRES

2004 saw two fires exceed 100 acres. Both of these were on the Craig Mountain District.

Table 1 illustrates the season's ten largest fires:

TABLE 1

Ten Largest Fires

Fire Name	District Name	Size	Total Cost
Valentine Massacre	Craig Mountain FPD	859	\$222
Middle Beall Canyon	Craig Mountain FPD	533	\$11,355
Lucky Dog	SITPA	95	\$517,088
Rice Creek	Craig Mountain FPD	47	\$869
Pool Knob	Craig Mountain FPD	37	\$36,981
21 Ranch	Craig Mountain FPD	37	\$38,486
Riverview	Craig Mountain FPD	30	\$190
Pardee Corner	CPTPA	19	\$5,810
Flynn Creek	Maggie Creek FPD	18	\$23,163
	Craig Mountain FPD	15	\$21,212
Total		1690	\$655,376

TEAM USE

The Idaho Department of Lands supported Interagency Incident Management Teams, with 17 employees serving as team members. In the Northern Rockies, IDL personnel held one position on a Type 1 team, and 10 positions on Type 2 teams. Great Basin participation consisted of six slots on a Type 2 team.

State personnel also contributed by accepting 119 off unit assignments in a variety of positions.

Only one IDL fire required an Incident Management Team. Myron Hottinger



Jenny Mercado (Cataldo) on assignment at Chatanika Alaska

(ex IDL) commanded a Type 3 on the Canyon fire on the Southern Idaho Timber Protective Association's protection area. This fire burned in continuous logging slash, and thanks in part to the States contracted Single Engine Air Tankers (SEAT), the fire was kept to 95 acres and a Type 2 team was not required. Highway 55

was kept open with the assistance of the Idaho Dept. of Transportation.

FIRE COSTS

The fire reports estimate 2004's suppression costs for IDL fires at \$1,212,986, with the ten most expensive fires of the year shown in Table 2. These fires represent only three percent of the fires, 11 percent of the acreage, and 62 percent of the cost.

Table 2

Ten Most Expensive Fires

Fire Name	District	Total Cost	Size
Canyon	SITPA	\$517,088	95
Pool Knob	Craig Mountain FPD	\$38,486	37
Rice Creek	Craig Mountain FPD	\$36,981	37
Mid Bugle	Priest Lake FPD	\$26,863	1
Blanchard 13	Pend Oreille FPD	\$24,365	2
East Mountain	SITPA	\$23,644	1
Pardee Corner	Maggie Creek FPD	\$23,163	18
Merton Creek	West St. Joe FPD	\$22,097	4
Emerald Divide	Ponderosa FPD	\$21,463	2
Flynn Creek	Craig Mountain FPD	\$21,212	15
Totals		\$755,362	212

Tables 3 and 4 illustrate debris burning blackened the most area, but had the lowest suppression cost per acre. Lightning fires had the highest cost per acre. The Miscellaneous category had the highest cost per fire, and the railroad fire had the least.

Our average cost per fire was \$4,154, and cost per acre was \$655. Human-caused fires cost \$204,638 (17% of the total). Of this amount, \$17,377 (8 percent) has been billed, and we have collected \$3,230 (19 percent) of what we have billed. Since the fire reports were completed, these amounts have increased.

Costs to the Endowments, in resource damage, are estimated at \$8,578. The majority of this (\$4,378) was on the Bear Creek fire on the Cataldo Forest Protective District.

Table 3

Number of Fires by Cause, with Costs

General Cause	# of Fires	% of Fires	Total Cost	% of Cost	Cost/Fire
Lightning	205	70%	\$1,008,348	83%	\$4,919
Debris Burning	27	9%	\$25,391	2%	\$940
Miscellaneous	27	9%	\$141,972	12%	\$5,258
Equipment Use	13	4%	\$25,800	2%	\$1,985
Campfire	12	4%	\$6,503	1%	\$542
Arson	4	1%	\$3,391	0%	\$848
Smoking	2	1%	\$957	0%	\$479
Children	1	0%	\$514	0%	\$514
Railroad	1	0%	\$110	0%	\$110
Total	292		\$1,212,986		\$4,154

Table 4

Acres Burned by Cause, with Costs

General Cause	Acres Burned	% of Acreage	Total Cost	Cost / Acre	Bill Amount	Amount Collected
Debris Burning	887.2	47.9%	\$25,391	\$29	\$9,313	\$2,980
Equipment Use	587.0	31.7%	\$25,800	\$44	\$299	\$0
Lightning	305.8	16.5%	\$1,008,348	\$3,297	\$0	\$0
Miscellaneous	67.1	3.6%	\$141,972	\$2,116	\$5,097	\$0
Campfire	2.0	0.1%	\$6,503	\$3,252	\$2,559	\$250
Arson	1.6	0.1%	\$3,391	\$2,119	\$0	\$0
Smoking	0.6	0.0%	\$957	\$1,595	\$0	\$0
Children	0.2	0.0%	\$514	\$2,570	\$0	\$0
Railroad	0.1	0.0%	\$110	\$1,100	\$110	\$0
Total	1,851.6		\$1,212,986	\$655	\$17,377	\$3,230



Hidden Ridge fire-Mica-Dan Brown

AIRCRAFT USE

The 2004 fire season began with the announcement from the Departments of Agriculture and Interior of the cancellation of the federally contracted large airtanker fleet. The cancellation was due to questions raised about the airworthiness of an aging fleet of aircraft not originally designed for retardant dropping.

In consultation with the Governor's office, the Department chose to augment the traditionally contracted aircraft fleet with additional resources to help mitigate the loss of the heavy airtankers. Five additional single engine airtankers and one medium helicopter were added for additional initial attack support. The success of the program was due in large part to a strong interagency commitment with IDL from the Idaho Panhandle, Clearwater/Nez Perce, and Payette National Forests, who hosted the aircraft at their tanker bases. The Forests provided the tanker base facilities including retardant, daily work direction for the aircrews, and aircraft dispatch as needed. The Craig Mountain District and the Southern Idaho Timber Protective Association were key players in keeping the bureau appraised of daily aircraft availability at Grangeville and McCall. In most cases, IDL paid for the aircraft daily availability, and the incident user paid for flight time. Through severity funds, the Idaho Panhandle Forest was able to contribute nearly fifty percent (50%) of the availability for the medium helicopter based in Coeur d'Alene.

Due to the lack of available, qualified pilots and aircraft in the United States, IDL ordered three Air Tractor 802F single engine airtankers from the Province of New Brunswick. The process to pre-position Canadian aircrews and aircraft in the US was approved and cleared through the Department of Homeland Security, Bureau of Customs and Border

Protection. These aircraft flew fire suppression support on interagency incidents in Washington, Montana, as well as north Idaho.

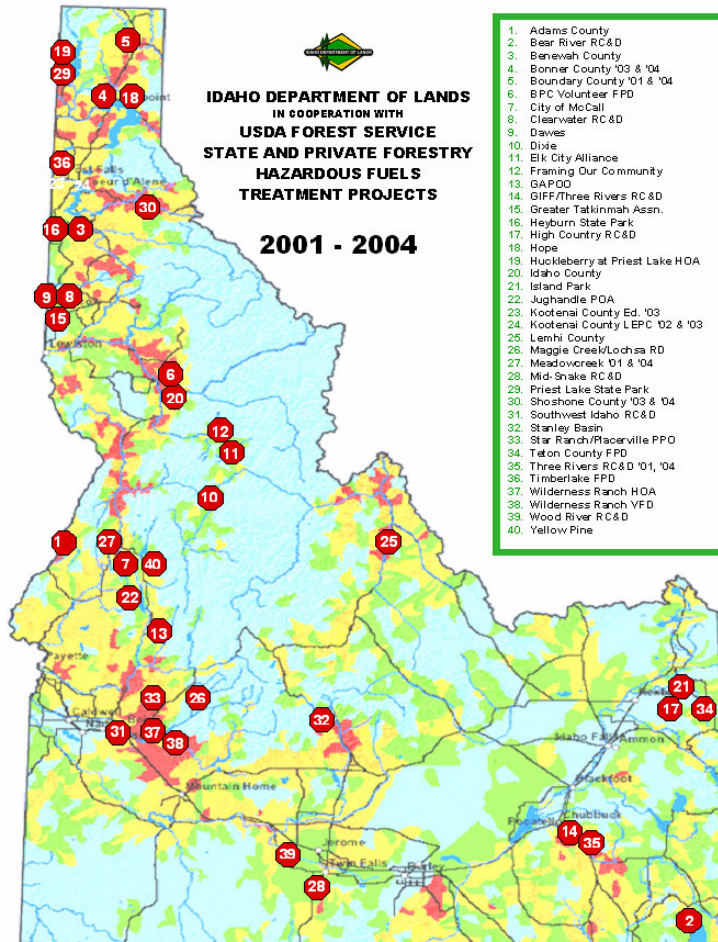
The other four Air Tractor 802 single engine airtankers were provided by Evergreen Flying Service from Louisiana and were based in Grangeville and McCall. A combination of these aircraft and other federal air resources have been attributed to several IDL incidents that were kept at either the initial attack stage or the Type 3 incident complexity. The potential savings by keeping these incidents growing to Type 2 complexity is solid justification for the additional resources.



Rock Fire-SITPA

Helicopter resources were based in Coeur d'Alene, Orofino and Craigmont. One light helicopter in Coeur d'Alene provided by River City Helicopters was supported by a nine person IDL helitac crew. This is the primary interagency initial attack air resource based at the Coeur d'Alene Interagency Fire Center. The lack of fire occurrence gave the crew the opportunity to work with the seven northern Districts to complete needed helispot maintenance. The Clearwater area was supported by two light helicopters stationed at the CPTPA office in Orofino and the Craig Mountain District in Craigmont. Both were furnished by Hillcrest Aviation of Lewiston. The additional medium helicopter in Coeur d'Alene was furnished by Panhandle Helicopters of Coeur d'Alene.

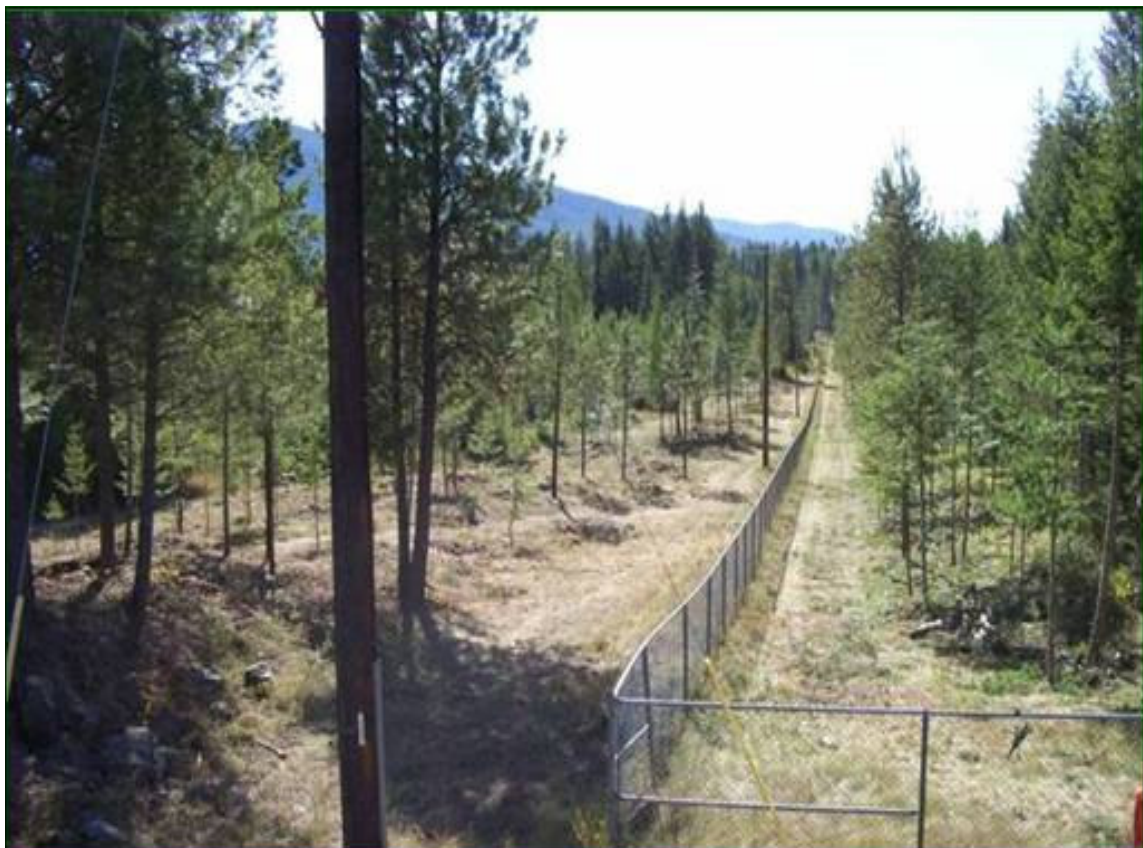
NATIONAL FIRE PLAN



The implementation of the National Fire Plan in Idaho is progressing under the guidance of the 14-member Idaho State Fire Plan Working Group (ISFPWG). More than 40 hazardous fuels treatment grants have been awarded in Idaho since 2001. In 2004 alone, \$2,778,500 was awarded to Hazardous Fuels Treatment (HFT) projects around the State (in cooperation with the US Forest Service State and

Private Forestry branch) through the State Fire Assistance and National Forest Adjacent (Stevens) Grant Programs. This brings the total of Idaho Department of Lands HFT grant awards since 2001 to \$9,314,669. Additional funds have been allocated to rural fire assistance and the Idaho Fire Chiefs Association under the direction of the ISFPWG.

Of the 44 counties in Idaho, 33 have completed and signed their County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plans, and the remaining 11 anticipate completion no later than spring 2005. For more information on this and other collaborative programs and collective efforts of all members of the Idaho State Fire Plan Working Group implemented under the National Fire Plan in Idaho, please visit either of the following sites: www2.state.id.us/lands/ or www.idahofireplan.id.gov.



Bayview Fuel Break

VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE (VFA)

Over 75% of the Nation's fire departments are volunteer (more than 200 in Idaho). Volunteer fire departments provide nearly 80% of initial attack on wildland fires in the United States. The Forest Service established the Volunteer Fire Assistance Program (VFA) to help these crucial volunteers through their State Foresters (Idaho Department of Lands, in Idaho). The VFA Program provides Federal financial assistance to organize, train, and equip fire departments in rural areas and rural communities. The VFA Program facilitates distribution of available funding to the neediest fire departments. In 2004, **39** rural volunteer fire departments received VFA awards totaling **\$170,315** through the Idaho Department of Lands in cooperation with the Forest Service.

FEDERAL EXCESS PERSONAL PROPERTY

The Forest Service is charged with assuring that federal excess property is acquired, used, managed, and disposed of in accordance with federal laws and regulations. Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) is loaned to state forestry agencies and rural fire districts for wildland and rural community fire protection.

In 2004, nine vehicles and various other items of excess property were acquired and placed into service in Idaho. Some of the miscellaneous items were, 7,200 feet of one inch hose, 24,000 feet of 1 1/2 inch hose, 80 five-gallon containers of fire fighting foam, a 100-KW generator, and an engine analyzer. Value of acquired property in 2004 was \$750,406.

The total value of FEPP inventory in Idaho is \$12,718,346 consisting of 430 pieces of rolling stock and 702 pieces of miscellaneous equipment.

WILDLAND FIRE PREVENTION

Offices throughout the state performed many wildland fire prevention activities during the year. Personnel were active at many of their community events, such as parades, fairs, and elementary school programs. Many activities were done on a cooperative basis with other government agencies or fire departments.

Some of the activities were:

- Supported Bonner County in re-establishing a fire prevention cooperative.
- Disseminated the wildland fire prevention message via roadside billboards, television and radio advertisements and local newspapers.
- Offices throughout the state performed and/or assisted local fire departments in W/UI home assessments.
- CPTPA held its annual Kids Forestry Tour, which gave participants the opportunity to learn about the forest as well as view wildland firefighting vehicles and equipment.
- Firewise workshops were held to educate homeowners on defensible space concepts.
- A new Firewise Community/USA will be recognized in Pocatello, Idaho for their work in creating defensible space throughout their community.
- Hired a dedicated fire prevention coordinator.

FIRE CACHE

The role of the Coeur d' Alene Interagency Fire Cache is to provide logistical support to requesting State, Federal, and cooperating agencies. Although the cache is primarily oriented toward supporting wildland fire suppression activities, the fire cache also provides assistance for Homeland Security, declared State and Federal emergencies and other natural disasters, as well as large projects such as prescribed burns. Fire Cache support is provided to a four state region as well as those requesting agencies encompassed within the Northwest Compact.

Statistically, the 2004 fire season was a slow year for the Fire Cache. The

Value of materials issued was:

- Total issue values **\$701,302.32**
- Total returned values **\$344,318.26**
- In-Region Issues **\$685,833.84**
- Out of Region Issues **\$15,468.48**
- Orders processed **556**
- Line items issued **2437**

During the 2004 season, supplies were processed through the Coeur d'Alene Cache for: **IDAHO; MONTANA; WASHINGTON; OREGON; NEW MEXICO**

The total Fire Cache transaction value for 2004 season including returns was:

- **\$1,045,620.58**

2004 Issues by Agency:

<u>IDL</u>	<u>USFS</u>	<u>BLM</u>	<u>Other</u>
324	190	21	21

Current Cache inventory value:

- **\$3,288,674.00**

NUMBER OF FIRES IN EACH SIZE CLASS, BY DISTRICT

District	# of Fires	A	B	C	E
CPTPA	70	64	5	1	
SITPA	33	28	4	1	
Pend Oreille FPD	27	19	8		
West St. Joe FPD	25	20	4	1	
Craig Mountain FPD	24	8	8	6	2
Priest Lake FPD	22	19	3		
Maggie Creek FPD	21	13	7	1	
Mica FPD	20	16	4		
Kootenai Valley FPD	16	9	7		
Southwest Idaho FPD	16	13	3		
Ponderosa FPD	12	7	5		
Cataldo FPD	6	3	3		
Total	292	219	61	10	2
Percent for Size Class	100%	75%	21%	3%	1%

CAUSES BY DISTRICT

District Name	# of Fires	Arson	Camp Fire	Children	Debris Burning	Equip Use	Lightning	Misc.	Rail Road	Smoking
CPTPA	70		1		2	1	66			
SITPA	33	1	1	1	2	1	26	1		
Pend Oreille FPD	27		1		4	1	16	5		
West St. Joe FPD	25		2		2		18	3		
Craig Mountain FPD	24	1			2	6	14	1		
Priest Lake FPD	22		2		1		19			
Maggie Creek FPD	21				1	1	13	6		
Mica FPD	20	2	4		6		6	2		
Kootenai Valley FPD	16		1		6		5	2	1	1
Southwest Idaho FPD	16					1	13	2		
Ponderosa FPD	12					1	8	2		1
Cataldo FPD	6				1	1	1	3		
Total	292	4	12	1	27	13	205	27	1	2

DISTRICT ACRES BY CAUSE

District	Lightning	Camp	Smoking	Debris	Arson	Equip	Rail	Children	Misc	Total
		Fire		Burning		Use	Road			
Priest Lake FPD	2.3	0.6		0.1						3.0
Kootenai Valley FPD	2.3	0.1	0.5	6.1			0.1		0.3	9.4
Mica FPD	4.9	0.4		3.3	0.5				0.4	9.4
Pend Oreille FPD	2.0	0.1		1.8		0.1			4.8	8.7
Cataldo FPD	0.1			0.1		0.5			1.5	2.2
West St. Joe FPD	9.5	0.3		0.4					14.9	25.0
Ponderosa FPD	6.8		0.1			5.0			0.5	12.4
Maggie Creek FPD	21.4			6.5		1.0			2.8	31.6
Craig Mountain FPD	112.6			865.7	1.0	580.0			37.0	1,596.3
Southwest Idaho FPD	6.9					0.1			0.6	7.6
SITPA	102.0	0.1		0.2	0.1	0.1		0.2	4.5	107.2
CPTPA	35.1	0.2		3.1		0.3				38.7
Total	305.8	2.0	0.6	887.2	1.6	587.0	0.1	0.2	67.1	1851.5

Note- Due to rounding, some additions are not exact.

SUPPRESSION COST PER ACRE

District	Acreage Burned	Suppression Cost	District Cost / Acre
Priest Lake FPD	3.0	\$76,730	\$25,407
Pend Oreille FPD	8.7	\$92,725	\$10,658
Cataldo FPD	2.2	\$21,491	\$9,637
SITPA	107.2	\$587,268	\$5,479
Southwest Idaho FPD	7.6	\$34,828	\$4,601
Mica FPD	9.4	\$25,976	\$2,763
Ponderosa FPD	12.4	\$31,535	\$2,543
West St. Joe FPD	25.0	\$60,867	\$2,435
CPTPA	38.7	\$79,999	\$2,068
Maggie Creek FPD	31.6	\$55,548	\$1,756
Kootenai Valley FPD	9.4	\$13,633	\$1,450
Craig Mountain FPD	1,596.3	\$132,388	\$83
Total	1,851.5	\$1,212,989	\$655

Note: Smaller acreages burned normally yield higher costs per acre.